

Remarks

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication that Claims 11-15 were objected to and would be allowable if written in independent form including all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By way of the present amendment, Applicants have canceled Claims 1-8, 11 and 17-20; amended Claims 9, and 12-15; and added new Claim 21. Eight (8) claims remain pending in the application: Claims 9, 10, 12-16 and 21 of which Claim 9 is independent. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the canceled claims and similar claims. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending claims, in view of the amendments above and comments below.

Claim Rejections

The Examiner rejected Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner also rejected Claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Zilberman, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,824,022. Furthermore, the Examiner rejected Claim 9-10 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Miller, U.S. Patent No. 6,726,618.

Applicants have canceled Claims 1-8, rendering the rejection of those claims moot. Applicants reserve the right to file continuing applications on the canceled claims.

Independent Claim 9 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter found in original Claim 11, which claim has been canceled. Because the allowable subject matter from original Claim 11 is now found in amended Claim 9, it is submitted that Claim 9 and those claims that depend therefrom, should be patentable for, *inter alia*, at least the same reasons that original claim 11 was found by the Examiner to contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 12-15 were amended to change their dependency. New Claim 21 has been added, which subject matter is found in original Claim 5.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Victoria A. Poissant, should any issues remain after consideration and entry of this response, in order to permit early resolution of such issues.

Respectfully Submitted,

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